



**MINUTES NO. 2025-07-WS
REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING
OF MADISON, ALABAMA
November 19, 2025**

The Madison City Council met for a public work session on Wednesday, November 19, 2025, at 5:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers of the Madison Municipal Complex, Madison, Alabama. Noting that a quorum was present, the meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Council President Maura Wroblewski.

THE FOLLOWING ELECTED OFFICIALS WERE IN ATTENDANCE

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| Mayor Ranae Bartlett | Present |
| Council District No. 1 Maura Wroblewski | Present |
| Council District No. 2 David Bier | Present |
| Council District No. 3 Billie Goodson | Present |
| Council District No. 4 Michael McKay | Present |
| Council District No. 5 Alice Lessmann | Present |
| Council District No. 6 Erica White | Present |
| Council District No. 7 Kenneth Jackson | Present |

City Officials in attendance were: City Clerk-Treasurer Lisa D. Thomas, Deputy City Clerk-Treasurer Kerri Sulyma, City Attorney Megan Zingarelli, Information Technology Director Chris White, Information Technology Support Technician Michelle Parker, Police Chief Johnny Gandy, City Engineer Michael Johnson, Economic and External Affairs Officer Traci Gillespie, Communication and External Affairs Officer Samantha Magnuson, and Director of Development Services Mary Beth Broeren.

Public Attendance registered: Terri Johnson, Dee Voelkel, Eric Bright, Bobby DeNeefe, Jennifer Coe, Chad Lemond, Shay Lemond

RAILROAD CROSSINGS-TRAFFIC DELAYS

NORFOLK SOUTHERN UPDATE

Director of Development Services Mary Beth Broeren introduced the guest speakers as the Regional Vice President with Norfolk Southern, Elizabeth Kennedy Lawler and joining online was the manager of Strategic Planning at Norfolk Southern, Joshua Logelin. Director of Development Services Mary Beth Broeren shared that over the years they had communicated over the issue that was developing with the crossings, especially the one at Sullivan and Downtown Madison. The Regional Vice President with Norfolk Southern Elizabeth Kennedy Lawler shared that the Director of Development Services Mary Beth Broeren collected data over a period of time to help support the claim of the crossing situation. She explained that the railroad has had a lot of economic growth creating issues in a local way. The Regional Vice

president Elizabeth Kennedy Lawler shared with Mayor Bartlett that Norfolk Southern was looking into adding infrastructure to help with operations running more smoothly. She also mentioned that grants were being investigated to help relieve some of the public infrastructure. Strategic Planner Manager with Norfolk Southern Joshua Logelin shared that the timing for the project was very conducive to the political climate such as the Space port coming to the area which should increase the chance of approval for the funding of the railroad crossing project. Council members shared their concerns and asked questions pertaining to the timeline of the federal grant funding.

MADISON TRAIN ALERT SYSTEM PILOT PROJECT

Information Technology Director Chris White shared information about the train monitoring system project. He shared that the project has been underway for almost four years public safety identified the need for a dependable real-time method to know when either crossing was blocked at Sullivan and Main Street. Information Technology Director Chris White shared that Mayor Bartlett asked him whether he could take that information and send a signal to communicate that a train was blocking the track through the Civic Plus alert system so the public could also benefit from the information. Mayor Bartlett connected IT Director Chris White with John Allen and DJ Klein to develop a pilot program. Information Technology Director Chris White revealed that after the three brainstormed it was decided that Main Street was the ideal location for cameras due to the site already having the power infrastructure that's needed. John Allen from the Committee of 100 shared how a train would be detected using audio, laser detection infrared cameras utilizing AI. Mr. Allen also recognized the donation by John and Heather Seifert to the C100 Creative Cities Fund to benefit Madison City Residents. Information Technology Director Chris White went over some of the high points of the project.

PROJECT PURPOSE: Increase safety at railroad crossings, provide dispatch with live video verification, reduce traffic delays from blocked crossings, deliver fast, accurate notifications to the public.

WHY MADISON NEEDS THIS SYSTEM: Frequent train blockings create major traffic delays, emergency routing can be disrupted, residents need timely real time updates when train crossings are blocked, current reporting depends on manual calls and observations, automated technology improves accuracy and response time.

Information Technology Director Chris White briefly explained how the notifications would be delivered. He shared that the notifications would be sent through Civic Plus and would notify when the crossing is blocked and then clear. The first thing that would need to be done would be setting it up with Public Safety to monitor and second would be to have notifications going to residents within a month. Information Technology Director Chris White shared the project cost breakdown and how the monitoring cameras would operate. He summarized how the train would be automatically detected and explained the public notification process. Information Technology Director Chris White allocated to council the benefits and the next steps.

HALF CENT SALES TAX FOR SCHOOLS

Dr. Ed Nichols, the current superintendent of Madison City Schools, shared PowerPoint with updated information on the city's growth and school districts. Superintendent Dr. Ed Nichols disclosed statistics and entities within the current student population. Superintendent Dr. Nichols highlighted the following in his PowerPoint.

- Specialized District Teacher Growth
- ACAP Standardized Testing
- ACT Scores
- 2025 AP Data
- MCS Proposed
- No CAP on Taxes/Revenue
- Per Pupil Spending
- Under-funded Mandates with RAISE Act impact
- State vs MCS Funding-Elementary
- Projected Growth-High School Electives
- Capital Projects
- Madison City Landscape
- Student Projected Growth
- Changes without Half cent
- District Highlights

City Engineer Michael Johnson shared with council some of the projects being considered were improvements to some of the sidewalk walkability areas to some of the middle and high schools as follows:

- Discovery Middle School- Hughes Road-710 Linear feet of five feet wide, sidewalk connects Hardington down to Oakland Trace
- Liberty Middle School-shifting the island crossing closer to County Line Road
- Liberty Middle School-running sidewalk down Karen Drive toward the back and possibly run 800 to 1000 feet to connect to outdoor classroom area
- Bob Jones High School-constructing 1640 linear feet of sidewalk from East View Road in front of Bob Jones down to Conger
- You may review the presentation in its entirety on the City of Madison Website at cityofmadisonal.gov under "Media"

Council members asked questions, and Mayor Bartlett asked the City Attorney Megan Zingarelli to help with the legalities of what Dr. Nichols was asking for. City Attorney Megan Zingarelli explained the rededication process of the half-cent sales tax. She also clarified that there would need to be a first reading of an ordinance at a regularly scheduled meeting and then the council could vote on the ordinance at a subsequent meeting. Council members asked questions pertaining to the ordinance. Much discussion followed regarding projections for the school system, student growth population, economic development and logistics of the schoolboard.

ADJOURNMENT

Having no further business to discuss, the work session adjourned at 7:32 p.m.

Minute No. 2025-07-WS, dated November 19, 2025, read, approved and adopted this 8th day of December, 2025

Council Member Maura Wroblewski
District One

Council Member David Bier
District Two

Council Member Billie Goodson
District Three

Council Member Michael McKay
District Four

Council Member Alice Lessmann
District Five

Council Member Erica White
District Six

Council Member Kenneth Jackson
District Seven

Concur:

Ranae Bartlett, Mayor

Attest:

Lisa D. Thomas
City Clerk-Treasurer

Kerri Sulyma
Recording Secretary